

Sales Xsellence

(An Xsell publication)

Increasing sales in a downturn economy

Sales is all about attitude and confidence. Is this the attitude and confidence of the *sales person* or the attitude and confidence of the *customer*? In the current economic environment, the attitude and buying confidence of the **customer** becomes a major factor in closing the sale.

While a successful sales person needs the right attitude and confidence, the emphasis is on understanding the attitude and confidence of the customer and having the skills to be able to change their minds.

Xsell's Managing Director, Anna Zammit, is a recognised Sales Trainer and Master Coach, with over 20 years experience in direct marketing, retail sales and corporate sales. Anna is an expert at using psychology to trigger sales. In the current economic environment, there's never been a greater need to use every resource available to increase your results, and there's nothing more essential to closing the deal than your prospect's mindset.

Anna maintains that the Global Economic Crisis is no reason to push 'pause' on your selling regimen – quite the opposite – the downturn in the economy is completely external to what you do as a sales person. In her many public addresses to corporate clients over a range of different industries, Anna has stressed that the basics of sales psychology are the basics of human communication. If you understand how your prospect thinks, you can adjust your approach to sell them exactly what they want, *in the way they like to buy*.

In Anna's recent presentation to Capricorn Village, she outlined the secrets of managing the 'negative self talk' of sales people and the 'negative talk' of customers where there is uncertainty. Once you understand the customer 'needs' versus what they 'want', you can influence their thinking and move

them to buying your products and services. By creating emotional connections and triggers to your offerings, you can drive a person from their basic needs and create a 'want' for what *you're* selling.

Over the past eight years, Anna has assisted many organisations in growing their business by working with management and staff, presenting insights into new sales methods and intuitive ways of thinking. Let Anna's intuitive thinking and sales expertise benefit your organisation. Anna is available as a presenter and keynote speaker for any corporate events, and has an impressive history of past clients who have benefited from her insights and skills as a public speaker.

Call us on +61 (8) 9260 0000 to make your next corporate event something special.



Why selling in a downturn isn't just about hitting a target, *anymore* ..

Every economic crisis works to separate the order takers from the sales *professionals*.

The truth is, a lot of organisations are finding that the financial crisis has made it all too obvious that salespeople need to evolve past the lofty practise of simply 'taking orders' from clients (something that became all too easy when times were booming) and develop into a true sales professional – which means that prospecting for new business has become critical to the survival of any business.

Here are some essential elements to consider when selling during a market decline:

Become a Market 'Sniper'

A declining market doesn't have to mean a declining income. Scout out the sectors of the market which are shrinking at a slower rate than others or are about to grow. Even during the Great Depression, sectors like the entertainment industry experienced large profit growth. Find these growth sectors and market to them, and work them.

Get creative and collaborative with your approach

An economic downturn is an excellent time to develop creative ways of prospecting new business. Take the time to sit with your sales team and brainstorm about the best products or services that you can offer existing or new markets and regions. Is there a more effective way of reaching your existing prospects? How can you sell the benefits of your product or service to expose the advantages of what you're offering to a new segment?

Be ready to quantify the cost of inactivity

Spending money during a downturn is seldom done by a company without a solid business case. For your clients to think about spending money, they first need to be shown what the consequences of *not* spending are. Help them get their budget approved by having hard figures available to show them why now is the time to lay foundations for the future, and what value your products and

services are going to give them to avoid a bad result down the track. Become a specialist in using the EPCS technique. Mastering this technique will guarantee dramatic increases in your sales results.

Practise overcoming 'shutdowns'

During the crisis, you'll be hearing many more objections as to why your customers should not buy. Even once faithful customers will be throwing up resistance, such as "*sorry, but my budget has been cut*" or "*we really aren't looking to spend right now*". Preparation is King. Think about what negative responses you're likely to get, make a list, and then come up with solid mitigating responses for each. Actually *practise* delivering these answers, and you'll find that your overall close rate will increase, because you'll have prepared, practised comebacks to make your case with the customer.

Help your sales force overcome these objections by introducing role playing at your next sales meeting.

Don't be scared of a new approach

As far as most of us are concerned, a downturn of the current magnitude is more or less unprecedented in *our* lifetime. A major change like this simply means that as a salesperson, you have to change with it. And that means allowing yourself to think in a completely new way.

Keep an open mind about what you thought you knew about the sales industry. CEO's everywhere are discovering that the strategies they have used for the last ten years are fast proving less and less relevant as we move through the new century.

Only salespeople who do not prepare and invite new ways of selling and prospecting change will find their closing rate drop as the market changes.

The only way sales people will increase their conversion rates in the changing market will be through embracing a new way of thinking, being more pro-active, and truly becoming a Market 'Sniper'.

Sales increased by **249%** Case Study

The current economy has presented a very fierce, competitive market to insurance suppliers.

Despite its importance, health and general insurance is commonly seen as a 'grudge' purchase by consumers and often takes a back seat on the list of financial priorities when times get tough.

The team at HBF have had a wealth of experience with the ups and downs of the insurance game. HBF have always prided themselves on being extremely customer focused, and committed to providing the best possible products and services to their members.

However, even WA's market leading health and general insurance provider for 65 years needed to prepare for increasing competition and a market downturn. It needed strategies for maintaining and increasing its market share as well as skilling its workforce to maximise opportunities.

So they called Xsell.

Xsell's unique, tailored approach to sales training and vast experience in sales management was utilised within HBF. Xsell trained over 350 sales staff, giving them the skills required to sell insurance, and close more sales. Nine programs were delivered to different parts of the organisation to cater for different sales functionalities.

Xsell reviewed both the face to face *and* the telephone sales processes for HBF, coaching the leadership group in the best ways to increase their results overall.

After working with Xsell, HBF went on to increase their sales by **249%**. The results speak for themselves. Xsell can develop a strategy for any sales requirements you have.

Call us on +61 (8) 9260 0000 to see what we can do for *your* sales results.

"The same thinking that has led you to where you are is not going to lead you to where you want to go."
– Albert Einstein